

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00270 241346Z

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ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0270

FOR SENATOR MATHIAS FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (MATHIAS, SENATOR CHARLES)

SUBJECT: CODEL MATHIAS -- SYRIAN SCHEDULE

REF: TEL AVIV 0537

1. ASAD FOR PAST TWO DAYS IN SYRIAN COASTAL CITY
LATAKIA RECEIVING CONDOLENCES ON OCCASION DEATH HIS
BROTHER. HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY UNCERTAIN WHEN
PRESIDENT RETURNING TO CAPITAL, PERHAPS TONIGHT,
PERHAPS NOT UNTIL SOMETIME TOMORROW.

2. GIVEN ABOVE, I CANNOT GUARANTEE MEETING WITH
ASAD WILL BE POSSIBLE TOMORROW. IF YOU DECIDE COME
AHEAD, WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO SET MEETING.

3. IN ABSENCE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, YOUR TALK
WITH FONMIN WILL BE MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTACT HERE.
HE IS CLOSE TO PRESIDENT AND IS ELOQUENT IF HARD
LINE PROPONENT OF SYRIAN POSITION. I PERSONALLY
HOPE YOU WILL VISIT HERE SINCE AM DEEPLY CONVINCED
OF VALUE OF CODEL VISITS TO SYRIA WHERE SO FEW
HAVE COME IN PAST. (SENATOR PERCY, WHO I BELIEVE
HAS JUST LEFT ISRAEL, DID MEET SUNDAY LAST WITH BOTH PRESIDENT
AND FONMIN. HE WAS FIRST US SENATOR TO COME HERE
SINCE ABU RIZK IN MID '74 AND, I BELIEVE, WOULD
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 00270 241346Z

JOIN ME IN URGING YOU TO COME EVEN IF ASAD MEETING

NOT POSSIBLE.) IF YOU DECIDE IT NOT WORTH TIME AND
COST TO COME WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF ASAD MEETING, I WILL BE
ABLE EXPLAIN TO SYRIANS SO THERE WILL BE NO
EMBARRASSMENT.
MURPHY

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